

PEOPLE LAND & WATER

WORKING with AMERICA



The Department of the Interior works with a national array of partners in carrying out its stewardship responsibilities for America's public lands and other natural resources. Much of what we accomplish comes about through cooperative efforts with state and local governments and communities, conservation groups, corporations, and other private-sector organizations. This issue focuses on that dynamic relationship, offering a sampling of collaborative efforts, and highlighting the increasing importance of cooperation in an era of declining federal budgets. **Pages 6-13.**

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Interior People: A Look at Department Employees

and Their Work



Above, Max Little, a member of the Seminole Nation, leads the Grand Procession through the Interior auditorium, followed by Michael Nephew, as the White Oak Singers drum and sing the procession song. At left, Headman Dancer Joe Martin, a solicitor with the U.S. Department of Justice, wore Plains Indian attire that included more than 100 eagle feathers. At right is Head Woman Dancer Kimberly Toyekoyah. Powwow photos by Thomas Hartman

Powwow Celebrates American Indian Heritage

n Hartman

x Little, wearing traditional regalia of the Seminole Nation, led the Grand Procession, ritually marching from side to side, symbolically seeking signs and tracks that lead through life.

Headman Dancer, Joe Martin, of the Menominee tribe of Wisconsin, and Head Woman Dancer, Kimberly Toyekoyah, of the Kiowa and Pawnee tribes of Oklahoma, followed, as the procession moved down the aisle.

Martin's Plains Indian attire included more than 100 eagle feathers. Toyekoyah wore a Kiowa cloth sash with a white horse symbol honoring her family name. Other dancers were dressed in traditional themes from the Iroquois, Plains, Northern Plains, and Cherokee Tribes.

The White Oak Singers, led by Colin Bearstail, played the drum and sang the processional song, as the dancers made their way to the stage for the opening ceremony.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs celebrated the 1996 National American Indian Heritage Month by using powwow to also highlight the Combined Federal Campaign. With the theme "Seasons of Change", the powwow featured Indian dance, singing, crafts, and an Indian-oriented Combined Federal Campaign booth at a November 20 ceremony in the Main Interior Auditorium.

Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, read the festivities by reading a proclamation from President William J. Clinton: "Tribal America has brought to this great country certain values and ideas that have become ingrained in the American spirit: the knowledge that humans can thrive and prosper without destroying the natural

environment. Tribal America must figure as prominently in our future as it has in our past. I hereby proclaim November 1996 as National American Indian Heritage Month," the proclamation stated.

Deer pointed out that American Indians have served the nation honorably in every war since 1776. So quite appropriately, a joint services Armed Forces Color Guard presented the U.S. flag for the playing of the national anthem. The Flag Song honoring the nation and its veterans, a Native American tradition at powwows, was drummed and sung by the White Oak Singers. Clayton Old Elk gave the invocation in his native Crow language and in English.

"American Indians have always supported strong families and strong communities," said John Nicholas, BIA's director of Equal Employment Opportunity Programs. "Combining a celebration of National American Indian Heritage Month and the Combined Federal Campaign shows the involvement of Native Americans and the BIA in supporting the community."

Master of Ceremonies Tom Fugate, of the BIA's Eastern Area Office, lead the remainder of the four-hour festival, which included descriptions of the symbolism in the various dancers' clothing, dancing, drumming, singing, and story-telling, as well as information on the Combined Federal Campaign from Kristin Oliver, a campaign director.

Since a powwow is not complete without a raffle, two free-ticket drawings were held for an Indian carving of a woman on a horse, made and donated by Navajo artist Les Herbert, and a one-year membership to the Interior Department Recreation Association's fitness center. Donations to the drawing were given to the undesignated fund of the



From left, Harry Rainbolt, Willie Chism, and Steve Chism discuss a scholarship fund eligible for the Combined Federal Campaign. Photo by Thomas Hartman

Combined Federal Campaign.

BIA employees in the auditorium lobby distributed information on Indian-oriented campaign groups. Rebecca Kalush and Naomi Elsworth demonstrated and displayed several Indian crafts. During the lunch hour, more than thirty children from nearby day-care centers visited the powwow and learned about Indian dress and ceremony.

The powwow was sponsored by the BIA's Equal Employment Opportunity office and a committee formed by the BIA Key Workers in the Combined Federal Campaign. Kimberly Toyekoyah, Steve Chism, Willie Collins, and Valarious Drew provided the leadership needed to organize the event and make it successful. The final results of the Combined Federal Campaign will not be in for a while, but the powwow was a spectacular success.

Tom Hartman is a member of the BIA's Indian Gaming Management Staff. The U.S. Postal Service celebrates Native American Traditional Dances with a commemorative stamp issue. Story, page 18.

for 10 years. Earlier that same day she received a Special Achievement award for the excellence of her work in the USGS mail room at Menlo Park.

Those on her mail route know her as one of the hardest working, most cheerful people they see each day. Smith, who has a physical disability in the form of a twisted left foot, and some learning disabilities, begins her day by sorting mail and loading it onto the electric carts that are used to traverse the 26-acre campus.

There are 60 stops where mail is delivered and outgoing mail is picked up. It usually takes Smith and a co-worker about two hours to make the morning mail run. Then it's back to the main mail room to sort all the mail they've picked up; lunch; and then a repeat of the operation in the afternoon. When asked whether her job at the USGS is worth the long bus trip, Smith beams and says, "You bet; I think it's the best job in the whole world."

Interior Trains African-American Earth Scientists

Cradling space-age receivers and guided by electronic signals from satellites, they made their way around the quiet southern campus, mapping land features to a degree of accuracy that used to require the skills of trained surveyors.

The "surveyors", few of whom had mapping experience, were participants in the 13th annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities faculty workshop, conducted by the National Park Service at North Carolina Central University in Durham.

And the campus walks were part of their training and research using global positioning systems technology. The workshop was taught by U.S. Geological Survey staff with assistance from 17 earth science faculty members from across the Southeast.

"It provided the participants with valuable hands-on experience which most would not ordinarily have access to at their respective institutions," said workshop coordinator Lee De Cola, a research physical scientist at USGS's National Center in Reston, Virginia.

The graduates will use their new skills in a variety of ways, including incorporating the measurements in scientific papers, using their knowledge in Geographic Information System courses they teach, and encouraging their schools to purchase hand-held GPS units to teach their students.

"I began my career as a regional planner in the 1960s when there were lots of minorities starting to make their careers in planning and community organization," DeCola explained. "By now, most of my minority colleagues are beginning to retire and,



In top photo, USGS Instructor Peter Murtaugh, at right with baseball cap, demonstrates a GPS receiver to workshop members. Above, Lee De Cola, at right with hat, the coordinator of the workshop, works with a participant using a Global Positioning Systems unit.

frankly, I'm not sure that the earth sciences and professions are bringing enough new African-American talent into the system. The summer workshops are a small effort to correct this problem."

The core of the training was a 3-day course conducted by Matt Florio and Daryl Huffman of Trimble Navigation, Inc., using six roaming data capture receivers and one stationary base unit. The corrected data gathered by the participants was used to produce a campus map. The USGS team worked with participants to analyze the GPS raw data for accuracy assessment, scale issues, and datum adjustments. Discussion was provided on data processing techniques, and the integration of collected field data with USGS Digital Line Graph data using ArcView software.

Two other USGS staffers, Larry Hothem and Peter Murtaugh, also conducted training at the workshop. Murtaugh stressed that even when systems seem to break down, there can be a useful learning experience, because people learn as much when systems don't work correctly as when they do.

"I realized that one afternoon, when the lesson plan broke down and pandemonium broke out in the room," recalled De Cola. "Questions were being asked from all sides at once by several of the educators, and of course I did not have all the answers. It was exciting that eventually we sorted out all of the questions relying on each other to find the information."

Lord, Love of Work Guide NPS Ranger

Rachael Keating

Keeping the radio on at his bedside, Bill Miller jumps at any chance to help anyone in need. A criminal investigator at Grand Teton National Park for 30 years, Miller doesn't think twice about working extra hours. "Some people call me a workaholic, but I love to work and be productive," Miller said.

In October, the Teton County Peace Officers Association recognized Miller's dedication and achievements in law enforcement by selecting him as peace officer of the year. Bob Maguire, Teton park law enforcement specialist, nominated Miller for his integrity, strong work ethic, and ability to elicit confessions. His strong sense of morality and ethics has garnered the respect of his peers in the law enforcement community and the judicial system, said McGuire.

"Most people think I am a pretty cool customer under pressure, but I was so surprised by the award that I couldn't think of what to say," Miller said.

As a seasonal ranger, Miller could not believe he was chosen when there are so many excellent, hardworking law enforcement officers in Teton County. "I could never achieve this award without a great working relationship with other local law enforcement, the prosecutors, and the judges."



Miller never planned to work in law enforcement. After marrying his high school sweetheart at 17, he and his wife farmed in Kansas for four years before selling the farm and going to college. He studied ministry, but ended up working in public education. "The Lord decided to put me in a different line of work," Miller said.

He spent 28 years in El Cajon, California, working as a teacher, a junior high counselor, a vice principal, and a principal—work that has helped him handle and read people during criminal investigations. "It helped me know when to be direct and forceful and when to be more relaxed," he said.

In 1966, six years after moving to California, Miller applied and was hired as a seasonal law enforcement ranger at Grand Teton National Park. "I had no training, except for two hours in a patrol car," Miller said, laughing at the memory. "Law



Ranger Ben Miller, above, who recently was named officer of the year by the Teton County Peace Officers Association, began working in law enforcement at Grand Teton National Park in 1966. At left, Miller, inspecting the hunting permits of Casper, Wyoming, resident Randy Patricelli, monitors hunters activities during elk season. Photos courtesy of the Jackson Hole Guide

enforcement was different back then. The rangers had a communal weapon shared between them and it was locked in the glove compartment," he said.

Miller had intended to spend only three summers in Teton park, but ended up staying. His five children spent their summers working in the park, too. During his first two summers on road patrol, Miller made it his personal goal to stop drunk drivers after investigating a crash in which the driver had died.

"Road patrol rangers used to shut down at night when most drunk driving crashes happen," Miller said. "I made it my personal goal to stay out there past my shift." At the end of his two months, Miller had arrested more drunk drivers than had been arrested in the previous 10 years in the park. Road patrol rangers then started to monitor the park at night.

After three years, Miller advanced to a supervisor position in Colter Bay. He made such an impression with the success of his criminal investigations that the park developed the position of criminal investigator for him in 1976. One of his supervisors, Walt Dabney, now superintendent of Canyonlands National Park, wrote his impressions of Miller's work in a letter.

"I have seen you deal with some of the worst of representatives of the human species and, even when undeserved by them, you have always treated folks with composure and outstanding sense of humor," Dabney wrote in the letter.

In 1988, the draw of Wyoming became too great and Miller retired from public education in California to move to Jackson Hole for good. He began working seven months out of the year at the park. Miller plans to continue working as a ranger as long as he can. "I have been so fortunate to have so many great careers during my life, especially being a ranger."

Reprinted from the Jackson Hole News.

USGS Whirlwind has "Best Job in the Whole World"

Pat Jorgenson



Cindy Maltby, left, presents a special recognition plaque for personal achievement and work initiative to Audrey Smith of the USGS Western Region Center.

When Audrey Smith leaves her apartment in Milpitas, California, each weekday morning, she embarks on a trek that would wear most people out before they ever got to work. But two hours and three bus transfers later, when Smith arrives at the USGS in Menlo Park, she's full of energy and eager to get on with the job.

Smith has no choice but to take the long bus ride to work, because she is technically disabled and doesn't have a driver's license. But that's about the only way that she has allowed her disabilities to hold her back, as evidenced by her recent selection for two awards that recognized her excellent on-the-job performance at the USGS.

Audrey received a client-of-the-year award from HOPE, the Santa Clara-based rehabilitation and training agency that Smith has been associated with

round the Department

User Fee Test Program Will Fund Public Land Improvements at Parks, Refuges, and Recreational Areas

g Overdue. Money well spent. Still the best gain in America. A small but significant step in right direction.

se were some of the initial and generally itive public reactions to the Department's reational fee test program, announced November 1996. The flood of comments from government cials, news media editorials, and the business munity heavily favored the pilot project that l increase fees at 106 Interior-managed reational sites around the nation and use the litional revenue for a backlog of specific repairs l improvements. (For a sample of editorial ction, see the Viewpoint Section, Page 32.)

en with the pilot fee increase, a family of four i enjoy a week's visit to Yosemite, Yellowstone, or crier National parks for less than it cost to see a t run movie," said **Secretary Babbitt**. "While rything else has gone up in price over the past years, Yellowstone is still \$10 per car. That's less n the price of a good video of the park, and ch less than it cost to visit an imitation lowstone at an amusement park in Florida," bbbitt said.

ew and revised recreational user and entrance s were authorized by Congress with broad artisan support. "I am pleased to see Secretary bbbitt has made good progress with the recreation demonstration program that was provided ough the Interior appropriations efforts," said ator **Slade Gorton**, Chairman of the Senate appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and ated Agencies. "I encourage the Department of Interior to move swiftly with its lementation."

re American people cherish the public lands and all recognized that the needs are enormous and wing," said **Representative Ralph Regula**, irman of the House Appropriations ommittee on Interior and Related Agencies. x dollars alone can no longer fully satisfy the and for increased recreation opportunities and ilities. This will provide much needed financial orces for the areas collecting fees to enhance visitor's experience," Regula said.

rance fees at the four largest parks will increase \$20 per car for seven days. Fees at most other ntified sites will range from \$2 per person to ut \$20 per car. The fees will be used for specific jects at the sites where they are collected and l be targeted for much needed repairs and rovements that have been delayed because of lget shortfalls.

example, the fees will enable Bighorn Canyon



Secretary Babbitt, who has climbed, paddled, and hiked through Interior-managed lands to raise public awareness of the need for proved upkeep and maintenance, receives a \$10,000 donation from the National Park Foundation for the restoration of the C&O Canal. Photo by Tami Heilemann, ISC

National Recreation Area in Wyoming and Montana to rehabilitate campgrounds and open new trails. It will allow for the repair of 60 miles of trails in Georgia's Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, give visitors to Everglades National Park new grills and picnic tables, put visitors at California's Yosemite National Park on new shuttle buses, and provide for handicapped access to the best fishing at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, south of Minnesota's Twin Cities. Hunters at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico will benefit from 50 acres of rehabilitated wetland habitat, and Texas campers will have campsites available at Amistad National Recreation.

The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have identified 106 of 1,880 sites—about 5.6 percent of Interior-managed recreational areas—to participate in the three-year test fee demonstration project. Congress has authorized the program for up to 300 sites (100 per bureau). Additional sites may be added to the project as public input and discussions with local community leaders are completed.

Under the current system, fees collected are deposited into the Treasury and are distributed by the Congress through the appropriations process. Not all recreational units charge fees at present. Only 186 of the national park system's 369 parks, monuments, and historical sites now charge entrance fees. And the estimated \$80 million those units collect each year covers only about five percent of the park service's \$1.4 billion annual budget.

The test fee demonstration project authorized by the Omnibus Consolidated Recessions and Appropriations Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-134) allows the collecting sites to keep up to 80 percent of the new fees and targets the remaining 20 percent to sites with the greatest need. The pilot program is expected to raise about \$50 million in additional revenue over three years.

Over the years, budgetary requirements have not kept pace with inflation, while the number of visitors to Interior recreation areas continued to increase. Last year, the national park system hosted 270 million visitors. The park service

To obtain a list of sites selected to participate in the test fee demonstration project and a brief explanation of how the new revenue will be used, please contact the respective bureau's public affairs office.

Fish and Wildlife Service;
42 sites identified; (202) 219-3861.

Bureau of Land Management;
17 sites; (202) 452-5125.

National Park Service;
47 sites; (202) 208-6843.



President Clinton speaks on the need for parks to retain some of their entrance fees and other ways of generating increased revenue for Interior-managed recreation areas during a 1995 visit to Grand Teton National Park. NPS Photo

estimates its backlog of deferred maintenance is about \$4.5 billion. The additional test fee revenue will be used to make additional funds available for repairs and improvements to roads, buildings, campgrounds, and nature trails. Some of the money will be used to improve educational programs, signs and exhibits, as well as visitor safety.

"Our highest priority as we implement the test fee demonstration program is to articulate to the public the need for their participation and support in order to maintain healthy, thriving, and accessible public lands," said Babbitt.

The bureaus have worked with local areas to develop fair and equitable fee collection programs. While public reactions indicate that most visitors support some fee increases as long as the funds stay with the site where they are collected, the Department will solicit opinions and advice at each identified site through a public outreach and involvement process. When the public involvement process is complete, it will help establish fee levels and potential infrastructure improvements.

"Public input, suggestions, ideas, and feedback are crucial to the success of this three-year demonstration project," Babbitt said. "We stand ready with the American public to rededicate ourselves to the task of enhancing and preserving our public lands."

A broad section of programmatic and geographically diverse sites have been identified to participate in the pilot fee demonstration project. As designated sites are announced, each local site will provide an explanation of the intended use of the revenue, allowance for frequent local use, and evaluation procedures for measuring success of the project.

Flight of the Condors

Six young California condors were released on the Vermilion Cliffs of Arizona December 12 in an historic effort to re-establish a second wild population of the endangered birds.

Secretary Babbitt signaled the start of the release that freed the condors near Paria Plateau, about 115 miles north of Flagstaff. The goal of the project is to re-establish the largest and rarest land bird in North America throughout its ancestral range. Condors once flew over vast stretches of the Southwest, including the cliffs of the Grand Canyon. Joining the Secretary for the release were Arizona **Senator John McCain** and Arizona **Governor Fife Symington**.

"This is a magnificent symbol of how the Endangered Species Act can, does, and is working," Babbitt said. "The recovery of this ancient and magnificent species is the result of a remarkable partnership and cooperation between the Fish and Wildlife Service and private and public groups.

Babbitt noted the support of the San Diego Wild Animal Park and Los Angeles Zoo in the captive breeding program that raised the condors as well as the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho. The Peregrine Fund also paid all the costs of releasing the condors in Arizona.

Peregrine Fund President William Burnham called the release "an

historic event that is the result of cooperation between the government and the private sector to include the people of southern Utah and northern Arizona." The release came after an extensive series of meetings with local governments in southern Utah and northern Arizona, public hearings in both states, and a three-month public comment period.

The population of California condors declined to 21 birds and the species was on the brink of extinction in the 1980s. In 1987, the Fish and Wildlife Service took the bold action of bringing the last 7 wild condors in the hemisphere into captivity at a time when only 27 of the birds remained alive. There are now 120 California condors in the world—94 in captive breeding programs and 20 in the wilds of southern California, in addition to the six released at Vermilion Cliffs.

Arizona's larger wildlands with sparse population offer a more suitable habitat for the condor and the

Department wants to release more of the birds in the region. Babbitt said the condors will not impede hunting or grazing livestock, and will have only a minimal effect on how the land in northern Arizona can be used.



A condor perches on a ledge at Los Padres National Forest in California. Photo by Carl B. Koford

When the Smoke Clears

Jane Anderson

The wildfires were out and the smoke had cleared from the largest wildfire season in 30 years. The Department's firefighters stood down from their long hazardous summer and fall of containing and controlling thousands of blazes across the West.

But on millions of acres of burned public land, the work of other Interior employees had just begun. Specialists from the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other Interior agencies moved in to assess the damage done to the land, its wildlife and cultural resources, and develop rehabilitation plans. Cultural resources include Native American archeological sites and artifacts as well as dinosaur fossil beds.

A typical program was carried out at **Mesa Verde National Park** in Colorado. From August 17-24, the Chapin Fire No. 5 burned 4,781 acres in the park. The Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation Team, a multidisciplinary group from Interior, was requested to assist the park with fire damage assessments. Led by **Irv Gasser**, the Team developed a rehabilitation plan to address short and long term needs to restore the health of the land.

Lisa Floyd-Hannah, a professor of Biology at Prescott College, assessed the burn for damage to threatened and endangered species of plants and animals. A survey also was done to evaluate the viability of plants to regenerate as well as an assessment of invasion of exotic plants, like Cheatgrass, St. Johnswort, and Purple Loosestrife. A project leader for the team, **Sarah Craighead** of Mesa Verde, was selected in September to implement the rehabilitation and assessment of burned areas using the Team's plan as a guideline. In October, about 200 acres of severely burned area were reseeded with native grasses. Hydrologists also assessed the burned area for potential damage from erosion caused by the runoff of soils.

The plan identified funding for assessing damage to the 295 previously recorded archeological sites located within the perimeter of the burn as well as the 75 new sites located during the digging of a fireline around the perimeter of the fire.

A team of 21 archeologists began the damage assessment of the previously recorded sites in



Protecting known and newly discovered archeological sites, above, and fossil beds, at below, is a major goal of rehabilitation efforts on Interior-managed land that has been burned by wildfires. Photos courtesy of BLM



October. **Gay Ives** was selected as lead archeologist. Her expertise gained during assessment of sites at Bandelier after the Dome Fire gave her an excellent background to implement assessment at Mesa Verde. As of November 25, eighty sites had been surveyed within the burn. Ninety two new sites have been found which also will need to be surveyed. These sites include a tower and kiva complex surrounded by several room blocks. Alcove



A California condor has a 10-foot wing span and weighs about 20 pounds. Photo by Noel Synder

"It is a peaceful and indeed a pacifist bird," Babbitt said, "with no interest in attacking livestock or other living animals. Think of it as a grand effort to tidy up the American landscape," Babbitt said of the condor's scavenging.

Only a 10-acre site where the birds are released will be restricted until the birds have dispersed. The birds were kept at the site in pens for several weeks to allow them to become comfortable with the climate and altitude of their new surroundings. To prepare the condors for living in the wild, the breeding program has been structured so that the birds have had no human contact.

They are the first six captive condors to be raised by their parents. However, Fish and Wildlife Service biologists will be acting like condor parents for a while, supplying the fledglings with supplemental feedings of carrion until the birds can learn to survive by themselves in the wild.

or cliff dwelling sites were also found that had never been recorded. It is estimated that there may be as many as 300 undocumented sites.

It is important that all of the burned area be surveyed as soon as possible so that the maximum amount of new site information may be acquired. This avoids potential loss of site data from erosion or burial, and new vegetation obscuring small sites or artifact scatters.

The archeologists concentrated their efforts in the high burn intensity area of the fire (1,104 acres or 23 percent of the burn). The vegetation in this area was completely burned and thus the soil has the highest potential for erosion. Any newly uncovered sites are at high risk for further damage or burial from eroding materials. Due to winter snows the project has been halted until spring when the archeologists will return to resume assessments.

At present, funding is available only for the assessment and rehabilitation of previously recorded sites at Mesa Verde. A donation account has been set up so that funds can be designated to assess new sites. Donations may be sent to National Park Service, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, 81330, and labeled "Chapin No. 5 Fire Rehabilitation Fund."

Similar efforts occurred across the West at numerous Interior-managed sites that were burned. A large scale project took place on BLM-managed land in Idaho, for example, where 438 blazes burned 752,000 acres. For about 90,000 acres that may not recover naturally, BLM developed rehabilitation plans and reseeded the area with native grasses, forbs, and shrubs to prevent non-native and volatile Cheatgrass from spreading. BLM also will rest all of the burned ground from grazing for two years. Nearly 300 miles of fence are being erected to protect the area.

"We have several objectives in rehabilitating programs," said BLM Idaho Director **Martha Hahn**. "Stabilizing the soil and re-establishing vegetation to prevent erosion is a major goal. Preventing loss of life and property in areas threatened by floods and mudslides and securing wildlife and cultural resources are primary concerns. And minimizing the establishment of undesirable vegetation like Cheatgrass is of longer-term significance to restoring the health of the land."

Working With America

We will continue to work through partnerships with local, state, and international groups to conserve and restore wildlife habitat. — Bruce Babbitt

Endangered Species Protection Requires Greater Cooperation

The U.S. Supreme Court considers a challenge to a key provision of the Endangered Species Act, an international report warns that a fourth of the world's mammal species are endangered with extinction and half of those may vanish within a decade.

A Supreme Court case was brought by landowners and conservation districts who claim they were harmed when the Interior Department reduced water flows from reservoirs on the Oregon-California border to protect two species of sucker. The suit alleges that the reductions violated the Act and that the loss of water caused \$75 million in damages to farmers and cattlemen.

If the court agrees, the decision could allow people whose economic interests are harmed by actions taken to protect endangered species to sue under the Act to stop what they view as overregulation.

Specifically, the landowners want the Supreme Court to return a lower appeals court ruling that said only people who have an interest in preserving endangered species have a right to sue under the Act's citizen suit provision. U.S. attorneys argue that people who suffer economic harm as a result of efforts to protect endangered species do not have standing to sue under the Act but can sue under other federal laws.

During oral arguments on November 13, several Justices expressed skepticism and concern with what one called a "piecemeal construction" of the Act's citizen suit provision. The court just read resource-user protection out of the Act, Justice Anthony Kennedy told Department of Justice attorneys. A ruling is expected by July.

As those deliberations continue, the most complete global analysis of endangered animal species ever compiled included that 1,096 of the 4,600 known species of mammals are at risk of extinction. The main factor endangering these warm-blooded, milk-producing animals is fragmentation and degradation of habitats by humans. Pollution also is a major factor.

The report was produced by the Species Survival Commission, the World Conservation Union and was jointly published with Conservation International. More than 500 scientists contributed to the study.

It is probably the most thorough scientific assessment of the state of the world's wildlife ever undertaken," said Secretary Babbitt. "The report's finding that habitat loss and fragmentation are primarily responsible for this threat is both disturbing and a reason for hope," Babbitt added.

The damage done by human activities can perhaps be set right by the ingenuity of people working together. Economies can thrive while protecting irreplaceable wildlife resources. Conserving the land and water habitat so important to wildlife and to our own quality of life," Babbitt emphasized.



Fifteen of the world's most beautiful, intriguing, and at-risk animals are featured on the U.S. Postal Service's Endangered Species Stamps issue. All of the animals depicted are on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Endangered Species list. The stamps are based on photographs by James Balog, whose work has appeared in numerous conservation magazines. The U.S. Postal Service is sending education kits to 65,000 schools and libraries to promote the stamps among young people.

The report's Red List of endangered species uses a set of objective criteria of endangerment that suggests that previous estimates of the number of endangered species worldwide may have been too low.

The report has no direct effect on U.S. listings, which recognize 431 domestic animal species, including 64 mammals, as endangered or threatened. U.S. lists

also recognize 525 domestic plant species as endangered or threatened. The complete report can be found on the Internet at www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/index.html

The book can be ordered by calling (202) 797-5454 or writing to the IUCN-U.S. Office, 1400 16th Street NW, Suite 502, Washington, D.C. 20036. The cost is \$40. A summary of the report's findings can be found at www.conservation.org.

Breaking Ground in Louisiana



From left, Dr. Brad Brown, Director, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service; U.S. Senator John Breaux; Louisiana Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Blanco; U.S. Senator J. Bennett Johnston; and Dr. James Cailliet, President of the University of Louisiana System. In the middle background is Dr. Wayne Denton, Vice-President of Research, University of Southwestern Louisiana. They are standing in front of the USGS National Wetlands Research Center, located in the university's research park in Lafayette.

Interior agencies joined with Louisiana state officials recently to help launch construction on a National Marine Fisheries Service compound at the University of Southwestern Louisiana's Research Park.

When completed, the buildings, which will be located next to the USGS National Wetlands Research Center, could host some USGS and Fish and Wildlife Service activities.

At a groundbreaking ceremony hosted by the USGS National Wetlands Research Center and the University of Southwestern Louisiana, guests spoke about the value that the new complex for the scientific community of the South and the economic benefits to the Lafayette, Louisiana, community.

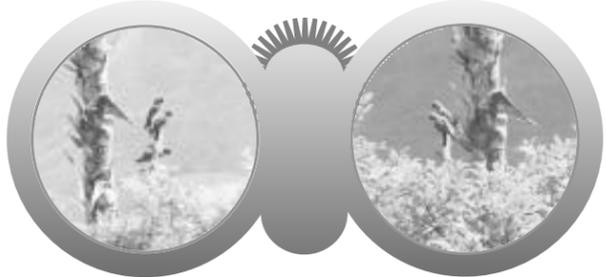
Prominent speakers included U.S. Senators John Breaux and J. Bennett Johnston, Louisiana's Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Blanco, University of Southern Louisiana officials, and Dr. Brad Brown, Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center.

Also participating in the groundbreaking were University of Louisiana System officials, architects, and contractors. In addition to the National Marine Fisheries Service, other potential occupants of the building are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USGS, FWS, Department of Agriculture, and the Smithsonian Institution. Following the October 24 ceremony, an informal open house was held at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center.

U.S.-Mexican Environmental Cooperation

Saving the Maroon-Fronted Parrot

The endangered parrot is mostly green with a stark maroon forehead and yellow eye rings. The entire population numbers about 1,500 birds, which live on 24 cliffs in the states of Coahuila and Nuevo Leon.



In the crevices of a rugged limestone cliff in northeastern Mexico, a rare bird has taken its last stand. The species only occurs within a 200-mile stretch of Mexico's Sierra Madre Oriental—a 9,000-foot occasionally snow-clad habitat.

But the remote wooded home that has protected this cold-weather parrot is now a popular site for vacation homes. Land clearing, especially in the pine forests on which the species depends for food, now threatens the maroon-fronted parrot.

With financial and technical assistance from the Department of the Interior, the U.S. State Department, and private environmental groups, the Mexican government is coming to the aid of the endangered pigeon-sized bird. The international cooperation has enabled Mexico to establish the El Taray Sanctuary that includes the limestone cliff nesting site. The reserve will be administered by two private sector Mexican institutions—the Monterrey Institute of Technology and the Museum of Birds of Mexico.

"The sanctuary will protect about 100 pairs of the species, a quarter of the total breeding population," said Brooks Yeager, Interior's deputy assistant secretary for policy. Yeager recently led a U.S. delegation that took part in a ceremony officially opening the reserve. The delegation also visited other Interior-supported environmental projects in the northern Mexican states of Nuevo Leon and Coahuila, meeting with Mexican authorities as well as local partner organizations.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided a \$55,000 research grant for the El Taray project. "Not a great deal of research has been done on wild parrots," said Bonnie Cohen, Interior's assistant secretary for policy. "In addition to protecting one of North America's only parrots, the El Taray project will generate new knowledge. This is a prudent investment that can be useful not only to Mexico but also to other nations with endangered populations of wild parrots," explained Cohen, who was instrumental in obtaining financial support for the project.

Mexican conservationists also hope that the colorful parrot—a species that people can identify with and care about—will become an environmental ambassador. The environmental movement in Mexico is about where the movement was in the United States 25 years ago. El Taray is extremely unusual because it is fundamentally a private sector operation.

"The parrot is an easily recognizable, charismatic symbol, like the panda," said Herb Raffaele, the chief of international programs at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Mexican conservationists hope that the species' preservation will motivate the Mexican public to become more directly involved in protecting the diverse natural resources that are under increasing pressure from development and overuse."



Interior representatives join Mexican conservationists at the base of the El Taray cliff. Standing, from left, are Dr. Noel Snyder, ornithologist, Wildlife Preservation Trust International; Brooks Yeager, Interior's deputy assistant secretary for policy; Dr. Rodolfo Garza Gutierrez, director general of ecology of Coahuila, SEMARNAP (Mexican Environment Ministry); Sr. Aldegundo Garza de Leon, director of the Bird Museum of Sotillo; and Dr. Ernesto Enkerlin, parrot project leader, El Taray, Monterrey Institute of Technology. In foreground is Anya Schoolman, special assistant to Brooks Yeager.

The U.S. delegation also took part in an opening ceremony for an environmental management training course developed with the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Latin American Reserve Manager Training Program, initiated in 1989 by the FWS's Western Hemisphere Program, is a pioneer effort that trains managers for refuges, parks, and natural areas in Mexico and Latin America.

The 3-month course, held twice a year in the states of Nuevo Leon and Yucatan, addresses a major problem affecting protected neotropical areas, i.e. the lack of appropriately trained personnel to manage the resources. Thirteen courses, which graduated 96 professionals, have been conducted thus far.

The course is coordinated by the Mexican non-profit, non-governmental organization Ducks Unlimited de Mexico. Project partners include Mexico's federal environment and natural resource agency (SEMARNAP), the Monterrey Institute of Technology, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The project

has previously received assistance from the USDA Forest Service, the Illinois Audubon Council, and Ducks Unlimited Inc.'s Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research.

the Mexican state of Michoacan, and development of management plans for Maderas del Carmen Wildlife Refuge and Cuatro Ciénegas Ecological Reserve.

The Maderas del Carmen refuge is part of a transboundary biological corridor that begins in the Chisos Mountain in Big Bend, Texas. The Cuatro Ciénegas reserve is a 30- by 40-kilometer valley harboring a remarkable diversity of wetlands and biodiversity of endemic species. The refuge and the reserve are located in the State of Coahuila.

The PROFAUNA project also is developing a teacher training manual, entitled Our Desert, Our Garden, dealing with the biodiversity of the shared ecosystems along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Entire ecosystems are shared by the U.S. and Mexico. "The Sonora Desert is shared by Arizona and the Mexican state of Sonora," Yeager pointed out. "The biological corridor between Big Bend and Coahuila is a priority transboundary conservation area."

"These joint conservation efforts reflect the fact that Mexico and the United States are bound not only by geography, cultural links, and trade, but also by a complex biological web," said Yeager.

Six Decades of Cross-Boundary Cooperation

Mexico is the third most important country in the world in terms of biodiversity and endemic species. It plays a vital role in providing stopover and wintering habitats to a myriad of migratory species.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a long history of collaboration with Mexico in biodiversity conservation and management partnerships. These initiatives address endangered species, wetlands, migratory birds, land enforcement, and CITES (the law prohibiting the illegal trade in endangered wildlife).

The U.S. delegation's September 10-13 visit to northern Mexico came during an important milestone in U.S.-Mexican cooperation on wildlife preservation. Sixty years ago the two nations signed the 1936 Migratory Bird Treaty.

Building on this relationship, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. Government this year signed an agreement creating the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife, Plants, and Ecosystem Conservation and Management. The pact will make it easier for North American nations to develop new partnerships for the conservation and management of natural resources of mutual interest.